AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Please amend claims 1-27 by rewriting same to read as follows.

--1. (Currently Amended) A data distribution method comprising the steps of:

classifying information for downloading content[[,]] transmitted from a user;

selecting one of a plurality of pieces of content data having <u>respective</u> predetermined formats[[,]] based on the <u>classified</u> information for downloading content[[,]] and sending the selected content data to the user[[,]] when the information for downloading content is classified as indicating downloading of new content data; and

sending upgrading data to the user when the information for downloading content is classified as indicating downloading of upgrading data associated with content data owned by the user.

--2. (Currently Amended) [[A]] <u>The</u> data distribution method according to Claim 1, wherein when the information for downloading content is classified as indicating downloading of upgrading data, the upgrading data is generated from the content data owned by the user and content data associated

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therewith among the plurality of pieces of content data, and the <u>generated</u> upgrading data ~~generated~~ is sent to the user.

--3. (Currently Amended) [[A]] <u>The</u> data distribution method according to Claim 2, wherein the information for downloading content at least includes information for selecting a piece of content data from the plurality of pieces of content data[[,]] and information for specifying a format of content data to be downloaded, and difference data is generated, based on the information for specifying the format, from the content data owned by the user and content data associated therewith[[,]] <u>and</u> the difference data ~~being~~ <u>is</u> sent to the user as the upgrading data.

--4. (Currently Amended) [[A]] <u>The</u> data distribution method according to Claim 3, wherein the difference data is generated based on the information for specifying the format and information regarding a format used when sending the content data owned by the user, <u>and</u> the information regarding the format ~~being~~ <u>is</u> stored as usage-history information.

--5. (Currently Amended) [[A]] <u>The</u> data distribution method according to Claim 1, wherein the information for

downloading content ~~at least~~ includes selection information indicating either downloading of new content data or downloading of upgrading data and information for specifying a format of content data to be downloaded, and whether new content data is to be downloaded or upgrading data is to be downloaded is determined based on the selection information.

--6. (Currently Amended) [[A]] The data distribution method according to Claim 5, wherein when the information for downloading content is classified as indicating downloading of new content data, the selected content data is converted into a format based on the information for specifying the format before the selected content data is sent to the user.

--7. (Currently Amended) [[A]] The data distribution method according to Claim 1, wherein the information for downloading content includes user-specific information[[,]] and temporary history information is generated based on the information for downloading content based on ~~a basis of~~ the user-specific information, and wherein usage-history information is updated based on the temporary history information after processing of data received by the user is completed.

--8. (Currently Amended) [[A]] <u>The</u> data distribution method according to Claim 1, wherein <u>when</u> user authentication is executed, [[and]] processing based on the information for downloading content is started when the user authentication succeeds.

--9. (Currently Amended) [[A]] <u>The</u> data distribution method according to Claim 1, wherein the selected content data or the upgrading data is encrypted before the selected content data or the upgrading data is sent to the user.

--10. (Currently Amended) A server comprising:

a storage unit ~~that stores~~ <u>for storing</u> a plurality of pieces of content data having predetermined formats;

a first generating unit for generating content data to be distributed[[,]] based on data supplied thereto;

a second generating unit for generating upgrading data using content data read from the storage unit;

a sending and receiving unit to which data output from the first generating unit or <u>from</u> the second generating unit is

supplied[[,]] for sending and receiving data to and from outside <u>the server</u> via a network; and

a controller to which information for downloading content received by the sending and receiving unit is supplied[[,]] for exercising control based on the information for downloading content[[;]]<u>,</u>

wherein the controller classifies the information for downloading content, ~~wherein the controller~~ selects one of the plurality of pieces of content data having the predetermined formats[[,]] based on the information for downloading content, and supplies the selected content data to the first generating unit[[,]] when the information for downloading content is classified as indicating downloading of new content data, and wherein the controller causes the second generating unit to generate upgrading data when the information for downloading content is classified as indicating downloading of upgrading data associated with content data owned by the user.

--11. (Currently Amended) [[A]] <u>The</u> server according to Claim 10, wherein the controller reads the content data owned by the user and content data associated therewith among the plurality of pieces of content data from the storage unit[[,]]

and supplies ~~these~~ <u>read-out</u> content data to the second generating unit.

--12. (Currently Amended) [[A]] <u>The</u> server according to Claim 11, wherein the information for downloading content ~~at least~~ includes information for selecting a piece of content data from the plurality of pieces of content data[[,]] and information for specifying a format of content data to be downloaded, and the controller causes the second generating unit to generate difference data, based on the information for specifying the format, from the content data owned by the user and content data associated therewith[[,]] <u>and</u> the difference data ~~being~~ <u>is</u> supplied to the sending and receiving unit as the upgrading data.

--13. (Currently Amended) [[A]] <u>The</u> server according to Claim 12, <u>wherein the storage unit comprises a first storage unit and</u> further comprising ~~another~~ <u>a second</u> storage unit ~~that stores~~ <u>for storing</u> usage-history information, wherein the controller causes the second generating unit to generate difference data based on the information for specifying the format and information regarding a format used when sending the content data owned by the user, the information regarding the

format being included in the usage-history information read from the ~~another~~ <u>second</u> storage unit.

--14. (Currently Amended) [[A]] <u>The</u> server according to Claim 10, wherein the information for downloading content at least includes selection information indicating either downloading of new content data or downloading of upgrading data and information for specifying a format of content data to be downloaded, and the controller determines whether new content data is to be downloaded or upgrading data is to be downloaded based on the selection information.

--15. (Currently Amended) [[A]] <u>The</u> server according to Claim 14, wherein when the information for downloading content is classified as indicating downloading of new content data, the first generating unit converts the selected content data into a format based on the information for specifying the format.

--16. (Currently Amended) [[A]] <u>The</u> server according to Claim 10, <u>wherein the storage unit comprises a first storage unit and</u> further comprising ~~another~~ <u>a second</u> storage unit ~~that stores~~ <u>for storgin</u> usage-history information, wherein the

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information for downloading content includes user-specific information, and wherein the controller generates temporary history information based on the information for downloading content on a basis of the user-specific information, and updates the usage-history information in the another storage unit based on the temporary history information.

--17. (Currently Amended) [[A]] The server according to Claim 10, wherein the sending and receiving unit encrypts the data supplied thereto and outputs the encrypted data.

--18. (Currently Amended) A terminal comprising:

a sending and receiving unit for sending and receiving data to and from a server via a network;

a storage unit for storing content data and upgrading data received from the sending and receiving unit;

a signal processing unit for decoding content data read from the storage unit[[,]] in accordance with encoding of the content data[[,]] and for generating content data having a quality higher than a quality of the content data read from the storage unit, based on the content data and upgrading data read from the storage unit; and

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a controller for exercising control as to whether the signal processing unit decodes the content data read from the storage unit or generates the content data having [[the]] a_ higher quality.

--19. (Currently Amended) [[A]] The_ terminal according to Claim 18, wherein the signal processing unit comprises:

a generating unit for generating content data having a higher quality than a quality of the content data read from the storage unit, based on the content data and upgrading data read from the storage unit; and

a first decoder for decoding the content data read from the storage unit and supplied to the first decoder.

--20. (Currently Amended) [[A]] The_ terminal according to Claim 19, wherein the decoder comprises a first decoder and the generating unit comprises a second decoder for decoding the upgrading data supplied thereto.

--21. (Currently Amended) [[A]] The_ terminal according to Claim 20, wherein the generating unit further comprises a

combining unit for combining data output from the first decoder and data output from the second decoder.

--22. (Currently Amended) [[A]] The terminal according to Claim 20, wherein the controller activates the first decoder when the content data read from the storage unit is to be played back[[,]] ~~while activating~~ and activates the first decoder and the second decoder when the content data having the higher quality is to be generated.

--23. (Currently Amended) [[A]] The terminal according to Claim 18, wherein the controller sequentially reads the content data and the upgrading data from the storage unit[[,]] and supplies the content data and the upgrading data to the signal processing unit.

--24. (Currently Amended) [[A]] The terminal according to Claim 23, further comprising a plurality of buffer memories provided between the storage unit and the signal processing unit, wherein the controller controls switching of the plurality of buffer memories.

--25. (Currently Amended) [[A]] The terminal according to Claim 18, further comprising an operating unit ~~that is~~ operated by a user, wherein the controller, based on an input ~~via~~ from the operating unit, generates information for downloading content[[,]] ~~the information for downloading content~~ including information indicating whether new content data is to be downloaded or upgrading data for content data already stored in the storage unit is to be downloaded, and sends the information for downloading content via the sending and receiving unit.

--26. (Currently Amended) [[A]] The terminal according to Claim 18, further comprising a decrypting unit for decrypting encrypted data supplied thereto from the sending and receiving unit.

--27. (Currently Amended) [[A]] The terminal according to Claim 18, wherein the controller sends data indicating completion of processing via the sending and receiving unit when writing of data received by the sending and receiving unit to the storage unit is completed.

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